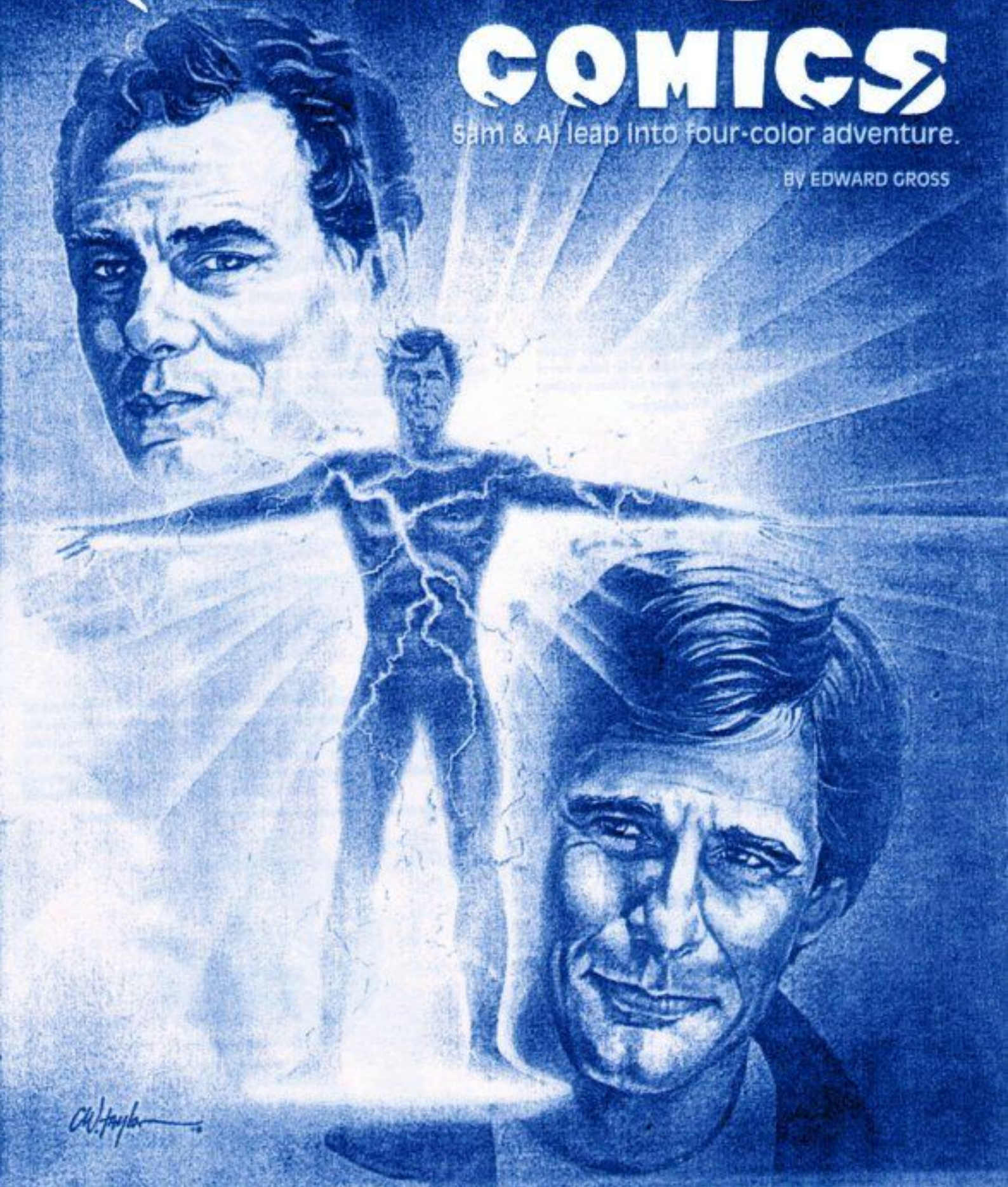


QUANTUM COMICS

Sam & Al leap into four-color adventure.

BY EDWARD GROSS



Ch. Taylor

Most time travel shows go to great lengths to say you *can't* change history," explains George Broderick. "*Quantum Leap* says, 'Well, sometimes things don't work out right, but here's a chance to *make* them work.' It's a very optimistic viewpoint."

It is that philosophy that guides Innovation Comics' monthly *Quantum Leap*, on which Broderick serves as editor.

"I've always been a sucker for time travel movies, books and series," says Broderick, who also wrote the first issue, "but *Quantum Leap* seemed to me to be a particularly original version. Instead of leaving the parameters wide open, they were putting self-imposed limitations that worked. Sam can only time travel within his own life span, so the farthest back in time he can go is 1953. That made a lot of sense, because one of the dumbest things I've ever seen is the old *Time Tunnel*. You've got these two guys, one wearing a three-piece suit and one in a turtleneck sweater, they're back in ancient Rome talking American slang and these people don't think anything of it. It just doesn't work for me. Because *Quantum Leap* takes place within his life span, it's *recent* history."

Jump Start

Once Innovation obtained the rights to *Quantum Leap*, Broderick decided that he would stick as closely to the format of the TV series as possible, because "if it's not broken, don't fix it." Surprisingly, each issue is scripted by a different writer.

"I want to have a little fun with the series," he explains, "and I want to make it a challenge to the writers in that I will write all of the leap endings. After that, I randomly hand them out to the writers so that it's kind of a round-robin thing. The plan is that they will also have a disoriented state of mind going into it, much like Sam experiences when he leaps. They aren't coming to me with ideas. I'm giving them ideas and they're fleshing them out."

"Many writers don't *just* write. They have other fields of expertise and I want to capitalize on that. For instance, Bob Ingersoll, who's writing issue #2, is a public defender in Cleveland, Ohio. I gave him an ending in which Sam leaps into an electric chair, because I wanted to see what Bob could do with it and how he was going to get Sam out of that. I also thought it would be a good chance to get a legal angle into the story. He took the bait and wrote a fairly decent script, one entirely different from the similar leap that aired on TV. It's not like we're treading on familiar territory or rehashing old ideas."

The third issue, which Broderick deems a "departure," is written by Steve Dorfman, a staff researcher who writes the questions for the comic book, comic strip and cartoon categories used on TV's *Jeopardy*.

Like the TV series, the *Quantum Leap* comic proves that Sam doesn't look good in mini-skirts.



"We're really playing up the fact that Al is a hologram," notes Broderick.

"When Steve learned we were doing the comic, he wanted to participate," Broderick says. "After some discussion, I said, 'Steve, I would like to capitalize on your experience working where you work.' And he said, 'What if I do one in which Sam is involved with the '50s game show scandals?' I thought that was great, so I wrote him an ending on an idea he had suggested to me and he wrote this really nifty little script. Strangely enough, he started working on this before we had gotten any information from Universal. They sent us a series bible, at the end of which was a list of the kind of stories you could do and those you couldn't do for the TV show. The game show [scandal] was one of the things that *couldn't* be written about. We thought they didn't want to deal with that subject due to Hollywood politics."

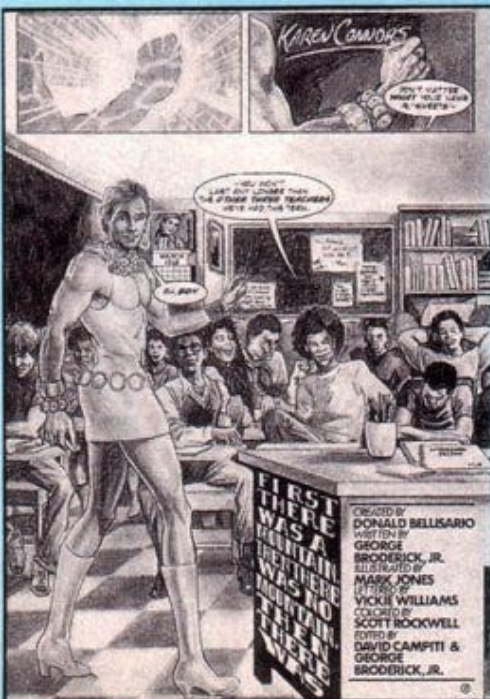
There are still people who are smarting from that. It's not a proud moment in television history. But we just let Steve go forward with the idea, hoping that we'd get approval from Universal."

The writer for issue #4, Terry Collins, works on a newspaper, so Sam leaps into the body of a newspaper editor; issue #5's writer David Lawrence is a bartender, and that becomes Sam's vocation.

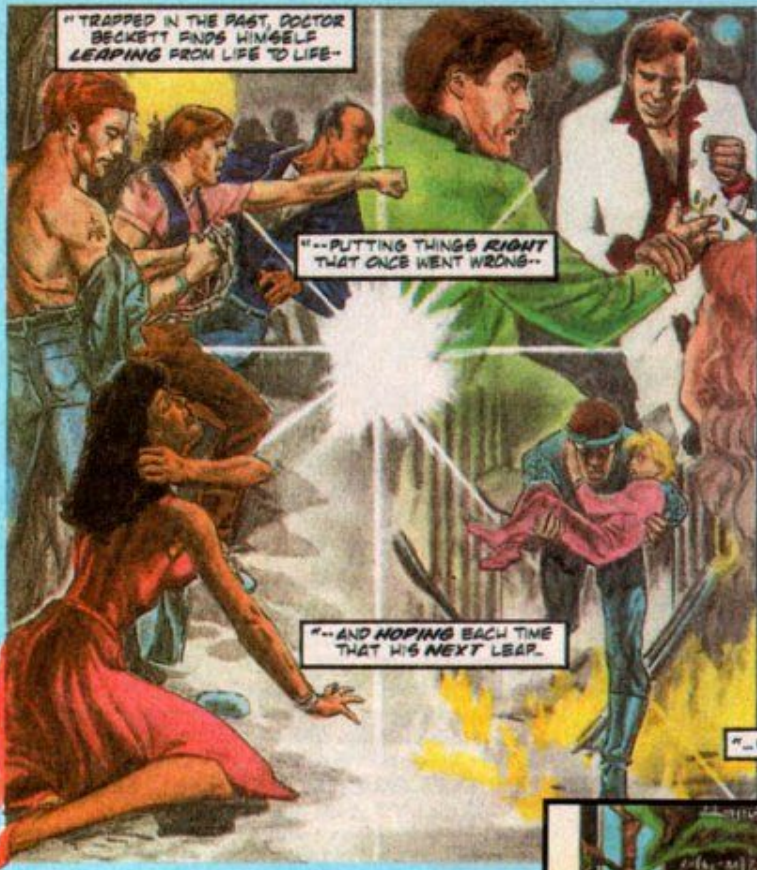
"Basically, that's the way the series runs," Broderick observes. "Occasionally, someone will come to me with a plot that's so good that I can't turn them down just out of ego, saying, 'I have to write the ending.' I say, 'This is great,' and I write an ending around their plot. The issues are structured pretty much like the show. On page one, Sam leaps into a new situation, and by page 23, that story is over and he leaps out. I write page 24, which is almost like a next issue blurb. The exception is the first issue, because there's nothing for him to have leaped from. The first two pages are basically a recap of the show's opening credits. It explains the series' set-up and what's going on in the event that there are people living under a rock somewhere who have never heard of *Quantum Leap*."

One of comics' advantages is the medium itself. In comics, Sam could leap into things—such as animals and babies—he wouldn't normally be able to due to TV production restrictions.

"We're still exploring what latitude Universal is willing to give us on these



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"TRAPPED IN THE PAST, DOCTOR BECKETT FINDS HIMSELF LEAPING FROM LIFE TO LIFE--

"--PUTTING THINGS RIGHT THAT ONCE WENT WRONG--

"--AND HOPING EACH TIME THAT HIS NEXT LEAP--



"... WILL BE THE LEAP HOME."

In addition to editing *Quantum Leap*, Broderick writes each issue's last page, determining Sam's next leap.

people and tell them, 'This is not the case. You were *not* kidnapped by aliens,' and basically keep this out of the press. This is 1984, before the *Quantum Leap* project, and they don't want any negative publicity that may hinder the project's getting started. We're fooling around with things like that."

States Broderick, "We just want to establish in the first four or five issues that *Quantum Leap* is going to be like the TV show. Then, we want to explore things that are somewhat different. The second half-dozen issues will be more creatively far afield than the first half-dozen.

"We are presented with a particularly interesting problem from the standpoint that on a TV show, with everybody moving and walking and talking, you always have motion. In the comic, the writers have found that *Quantum Leap* tends to be a very talking-heads kind of series. There's a lot of interplay between Sam and Al, and we have

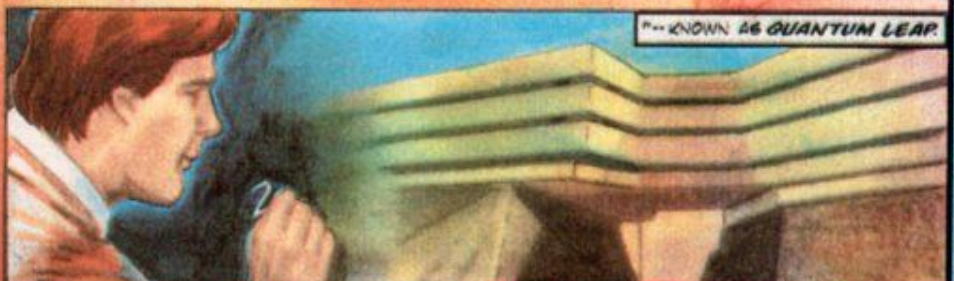
things," admits Broderick. "I had someone pitch a story idea that takes place entirely in the Leap Chamber, from the point-of-view of the guy who has leaped into Sam's body. Basically, Sam appears at the very end, and the guy is in Sam's body for the entire story, being interviewed by the psychiatrists and Al, who keeps leaving and coming back. At the story's end, the guy leaps back and his problem has been solved. *Everything* is done from his perspective. We're going to flesh that out, run it by Universal and see if they'll let us do that. I've already discussed with several writers the idea of Sam leaping into a very, very small child. I don't know if we would go as far as his being an infant, but our production values don't cost us a dime. Whatever can be drawn, we can do.

"Also, we've been toying with the idea of different, nontraditional leaps. In an interview at one point, someone from the show mentioned that when Sam changes places with these people, they end up in an imaging chamber, and it's like a sterile operating room. These doctors have masks on and the person doesn't see many faces. When they do look into the reflection on the overhead surgical lamp, they see Sam's face. So, I concocted an ending which I gave to someone in the hopes that they'll write a really cool story about it. Sam leaps into the body of somebody in 1984, and there is a cult built around the fact that all of these people over the years believe that they've been kidnapped by aliens and that the aliens' leader looks just like Sam. They have this big mural on the wall with his face on it. Sam's business there is to basically dissuade these

Broderick wants to follow the TV series' format before making Sam take "different, nontraditional leaps."



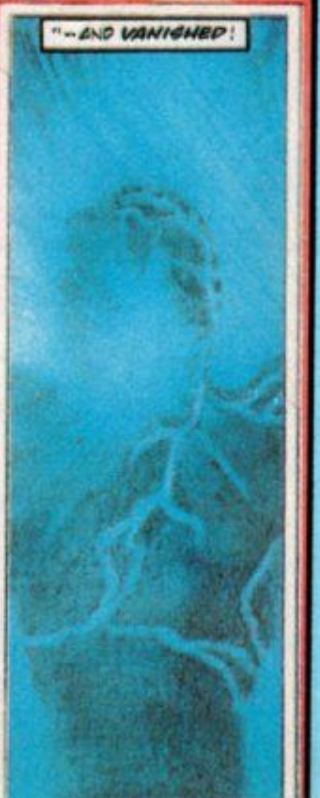
"THEORIZING THAT ONE COULD TIME TRAVEL WITHIN HIS OWN LIFETIME, DOCTOR SAM BECKETT LED AN ELITE GROUP OF SCIENTISTS INTO THE DESERT TO DEVELOP A TOP SECRET PROJECT--



"-- KNOWN AS QUANTUM LEAP.

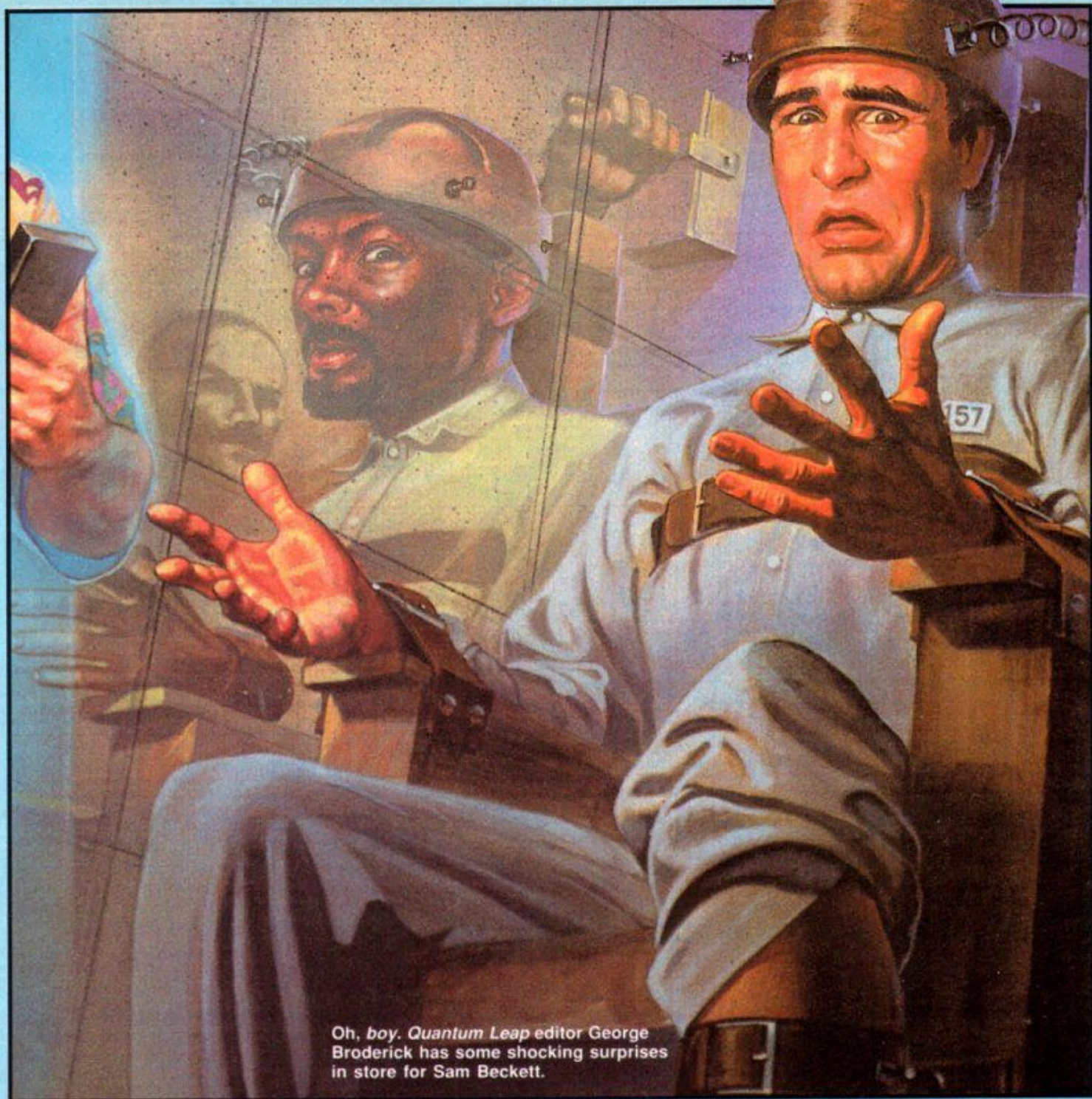


"PRESSURED TO PROVE HIS THEORIES, OR LOSE GOVERNMENT FUNDING, DOCTOR BECKETT PREMATURELY STEPPED INTO THE ACCELERATOR CHAMBER--



"-- END VANISHED!

All Quantum Leap Interior Art: Mark Jones. Colors: Steve Rockwell



Oh, boy. *Quantum Leap* editor George Broderick has some shocking surprises in store for Sam Beckett.

Art: C. Winston Taylor

to do something visual. So, we're really playing up the fact that Al is a hologram, and we've got him walking through mailboxes and other things as he talks. We're constantly reinforcing the fact that Al *isn't* really there. We can do that, whereas they can't on the TV show. In fact, in the first issue that I wrote, I have Al doing hologram tricks that, if they were to film it the way I wrote it, they would blow their budget for a year."

One of the most intriguing aspects of doing a comic is the possibility of penning sequels to aired episodes. "There was a TV episode in which Sam leaped into the body of a coroner who was there to solve the murder of this young girl. He solved this mystery and wound up sending a woman to prison for a crime of passion. This woman was apparently in love with this other girl

because she was a lesbian, but this was 1957 and you didn't talk about stuff like that. I was discussing this with the author and I said, 'You know, Sam is always leaping in to make people's lives better. OK, fine, he has solved the mystery, but it certainly didn't make this woman's life easier. She has spent 20 years in prison.' It would be interesting if he leaped into her body when she's being released from prison in the '70s, middle-aged, ex-convict and lesbian. He would definitely have his work cut out for him."

Broderick is confident that fans of the TV series will enjoy the *Quantum Leap* comic, finding it different enough to warrant the cost factor (each issue is fully painted in color with a \$2.50 price tag).

"You'll get everything you would see on the TV show and *more*," he promises, "because we have unlimited production val-

ues. We can do things on the written and drawn comic book page in several panels that would take them maybe an entire episode to set up. We'll be exploring different avenues of Sam's leaps and some of the repercussions of those leaps.

"I haven't gotten any feedback from anyone yet, but there are certain things I would like to explore. Theoretically, on the show, Sam saved his brother's life in Vietnam. How does that effect him now? It may come down to the fact that he makes too many of these changes and it ultimately makes the reason for his doing the *Quantum Leap* in the first place null and void. I want to explore some of those things in future issues, and other elements they haven't touched on in-depth in the shows," says George Broderick. "The possibilities for *Quantum Leap* in comics are wide open!" ☆